

# **DSA’s “Navigation Construction Oversight Requirements to Ensure Certification” Presentation – Text Transcript of Audio Narration**

## **Slide 1: Navigation Construction Oversight Requirements to Ensure Certification**

This presentation provides design professionals with practical guidance for navigating construction oversight requirements and DSA expectations to ensure project certification. Achieving certification is a primary goal for the entire construction team and DSA’s certification process.

## **Slide 2: Key Points of Interest After DSA Approval**

The design professional has various responsibilities throughout the project, and these can be separated based on the stage of the project’s progression. Specifically, these can be grouped according to the following three distinct timeframes:

- Prior to construction
- During construction
- And, last, but certainly not least, after project construction is completed.

This presentation will go through each of these stages and identify, from a high level view, DSA processes, procedures, and collaborative tools applicable to the design professional after DSA approval is secured for the project construction documents.

All of these stages tie into the fact that certification starts when construction begins.

## **Slide 3: Prior to Construction**

The first stage we will cover is prior to construction. This stage emphasizes many important design professional responsibilities.

## **Slide 4: Receiving DSA Approved Documents**

Within five working days of the stamping of the approved project plans and specifications by the Division of the State Architect (DSA), DSA issues an application approval letter to the School District. This letter serves as DSA’s *“written approval of the plans, as to safety of design and construction”* required by the Education Code, before letting a contract for any construction.

(CAC Section 4-318(b))

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Approved construction documents will be distributed to the design professional as indicated on the completed form [DSA 145](#) – they will either be mailed to or picked up by design professional staff.

Approved construction documents typically include plans, specifications, and the form [DSA 103: Statement of Structural Tests and Special Inspections](#). The form DSA-103 is usually provided at stamp-out rather than shipped or picked up with the approved plans and specifications.

### **Slide 5: Timelines for Construction**

Project construction must commence within one year of the application approval letter date or the application may be voided.

If construction will not commence within one year, renewals may be granted in annual increments up to a maximum of three. In other words, the extensions cannot exceed four years of the date of the application approval letter. A written request for extension of approval must be made by the school district to DSA for each extension request.

(CAC Section 4-330)

### **Slide 6: Other Responsible Design Professionals**

The form [DSA 1](#) (which is the Application for Approval of Plans and Specifications), completed by the Design Professional in General Responsible Charge, must include the names of all individuals delegated responsibility for observation of construction. This information is given on the second page of the document.

DSA must be notified by the design professional of any changes to these individuals by submitting a form [DSA 108](#) (Change in Delegation of Responsibility) except the Geotechnical Engineer, which requires submission of a form [DSA 109](#) (Transfer of Responsibility: Geotechnical Engineer).

(CAC Sections 4-316(d) and 4-341(b))

### **Slide 7: Securing Inspector Approvals**

According to the California Administrative Code and DSA Procedure PR 13-01, the design professional must submit a form [DSA 5-PI](#) (Project Inspector Qualification and Approval) to DSA

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via email to secure approval of the Project Inspector (PI) prior to commencement of any construction on the project.

Similarly, if required – please refer to DSA [IR A-12](#) for further information – the design professional shall submit a form [DSA 5-AI](#) (Assistant Inspector Qualification and Approval) to DSA to secure approval of an Assistant Inspector. DSA Procedure PR 13-01 provides additional clarification that the design professional is responsible to provide general direction of the work of the Project Inspector.

### **(CAC Sections 4-333(b)5 and (d), and 4-341(d))**

The design professional must also secure approval from DSA using the form [DSA 5-SI](#) for any special inspectors who contract individually and directly with the school board (not employed by the Laboratory of Record) prior to commencement of work for which special inspection is required. Verify the qualifications and experience for such special inspectors. DSA PR 13-01 also provides additional requirements regarding the electronic submission to DSA of forms DSA 5-PI, 5-AI and 5-SI.

### **(CAC Section 4-335(f)1B)**

All of these documents shall be submitted via email to the appropriate office at the emails shown.

## **Slide 8: Securing Laboratory of Record Approval**

The design professional must provide assistance to the school board in the selection of a Laboratory of Record (LOR) acceptable to DSA through the Laboratory Evaluation and Acceptance (LEA) program to provide the required structural tests and special inspections for the project.

### **(CAC Sections 4-335(a) and 4-335.1(a))**

## **Slide 9: Distributing DSA Approved Construction Documents**

The design professional must provide copies of DSA-approved plans, specifications, [DSA-103](#), addenda, revisions, construction change documents (CCD) and deferred approvals to the project inspector, laboratory of record, and any independent special inspectors hired directly and independently by the school district, prior to the start of construction.

### **(CAC Sections 4-335(a), 4-338(b), 4-341(b) and (g))**

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The design professional shall discuss specific issues relating to the scheduling and implementation of the structural tests and special inspections for the project with the project inspector, laboratory of record and any independent special inspectors hired by the school district to ensure compliance with that program and facilitate project certification. These discussions are most beneficial when provided to the entire team during one of the initial project start meetings.

**(CAC Sections 4-341(g))**

### **Slide 10: Revisions or Addenda**

Currently, any changes, even those beyond structural, fire and life safety and accessibility portions of the work, made to DSA-approved construction documents are required to be submitted to DSA for review and approval, if the changes are made prior to letting a construction contract.

**(CAC Section 4-338(b))**

Additional fees apply to cover the costs of reviewing these changes. Hourly fee rates for DSA reviews are provided in DSA Interpretation of Regulations [IR A-30](#).

**(CAC Section 4-323)**

### **Slide 11: DSA 102-IC (Construction Start Notice / Inspection Card Request) Completion (1 of 2)**

The design professional must submit a copy of the completed Construction Start Notice/Inspection Card Request ([DSA 102-IC](#)) to DSA via email. This will trigger DSA to initiate the collaborative cloud-based communication system ([DSAbbox](#)) for the construction team. The form DSA 102-IC includes contact information for all team members, thereby facilitating viewing, sharing, and submittal of required documents between all team members.

**(CAC Section 4-331)**

### **Slide 12: DSA 102-IC (Construction Start Notice / Inspection Card Request) Completion (2 of 2)**

DSA will also generate the appropriate number of Project Inspection Cards for the project and upload them into the project inspector's folder in [DSAbbox](#).

The number of inspection cards is dictated by the information provided on the form DSA 153.

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Generally there is one inspection card issued per building, with exceptions for relocatable buildings, plus one for the sitework.

Refer to DSA [PR 13-01](#), Section 1.3 for additional information and examples.

### **Slide 13: During Construction**

We now will move to the next stage: during construction.

### **Slide 14: Construction Oversight Process (1 of 3)**

DSA Procedure PR 13-01 describes the details of DSA's construction oversight process, improving methods that facilitate certification since June of 2013. This procedure is based on current regulations in the California Administrative Code, which is Part 1 of California Code of Regulations, Title 24. It provides the required and Code-prescribed method for compliant communication, and documentation of construction inspection and material testing.

**(Essential Services – CAC 4-201 thru 4-249 / Public Schools – 4-301 thru 4-355, and 4-401 thru 4-435 (FLS))**

### **Slide 15: Construction Oversight Process (2 of 3)**

DSA PR 13-01 contains several important sections for the design professional, with design professional responsibilities listed in sections 1.12 and 1.13 and information about electronic submittals found in sections 4, 4.1, and 4.2.3.

### **Slide 16: Construction Oversight Process (3 of 3)**

For small or fast projects, there are some exemptions to the requirements in DSA PR 13-01. These allowances are described in DSA Policy [PL 14-01](#) and basically eliminate interim verified reports. The DSA field engineer and supervisor are the arbiters determining use of this policy for a given project. Example projects include shade structures, carports, field lighting, etc.

### **Slide 17: Using DSABox (1 of 6) - Overview**

[DSABox](#) provides a free, secure, cloud-based collaborative solution allowing greater transparency and communication between DSA field engineers and designated stakeholders. It

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provides both internal and external stakeholders the ability to collaborate, share and view documents in real time, in one location, not previously possible with DSA.

A very helpful External User's Training Module (EUTM) is available for all DSAbbox users, located on DSA's website, and coupled with Section 4 of DSA PR 13-01, will prove an invaluable aid in navigating and utilizing DSAbbox.

### **Slide 18: Using DSAbbox (2 of 6) – DSAbbox Project Structure**

The project folder structure for DSAbbox is set up by DSA for receipt of documents, as illustrated in this diagram, and is generated based on the information provided by the design professional on the form DSA 102-IC. The main collaborator folders are referred to as "tracks," and each track contains a variety of subfolders where specific documents (or files) are uploaded by authorized team collaborators.

All project collaborators are provided with "Viewer" permissions for all project folders. However, only certain collaborators are provided with "Uploader" permissions, allowing them to upload files to folders within their respective track specified by DSA. Design professionals can indicate in the form DSA 102-IC multiple individuals within particular tracks to receive "Uploader" permissions. This level of security maintains the integrity and accuracy of the information uploaded into DSAbbox. Furthermore, all files uploaded to DSAbbox are maintained in a retrievable archive system within each folder thereby permitting previous versions to be accessed at any time.

There is also a separate box system, called Certification Box, for completed projects. The certification process is covered in DSA Procedure PR 13-02 and will be briefly discussed in the last section of this presentation.

### **Slide 19: Using DSAbbox (3 of 6) – Required Usage**

DSA requires design professionals to use DSAbbox for certain document submittals – by uploading them to their respective folder in their track in DSAbbox. These are: the DSA-approved Statement of Structural Tests and Special Inspections (form DSA 103), any construction change documents (CCDs) affecting the structural, fire and life safety or accessibility portions of the work (using form DSA 140) and design professional interim and final verified reports (form DSA 6-AE). These will be discussed more later in this presentation.

The design professional must monitor the activities of other collaborators within DSAbbox, especially from the perspective of ensuring interim and final verified reports are uploaded in a timely manner, as required for other DSAbbox collaborators.

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The design professional must also use DSAbbox to receive (View) DSA issued field trip notes, which are issued by the DSA field representative using form DSA 135. These field trip notes are official DSA communications regarding the project and often identify action items for design professionals and others to which responses are required, such as requiring submission of construction change documents to DSA for review based on field modifications to the DSA-approved construction documents.

### **Slide 20: Using DSAbbox (4 of 6) – Uploading Files**

Uploading files to DSAbbox is straightforward. After logging into the system, navigate to the desired project folder. Then navigate to the appropriate track, which is the design professional in this example. Next, navigate to the folder in which uploading will occur. Next you will go to upload a file, then navigate to the location, and upload the file. You can immediately view the file if desired. Alternatively, you can simply drag and drop a file into the appropriate DSAbbox folder.

### **Slide 21: Using DSAbbox (5 of 6) – Naming Standards & Managing Notifications**

The design professional must follow the file naming standards provided in Section 1.4 of the EUTM when submitting documents to DSAbbox, paying close attention to which names include a date and which do not, as well as the format required for the date.

DSAbbox also has file activity notification features which can be user customized and augmented further by using personal email filters.

### **Slide 22: Using DSAbbox (6 of 6) – Recommended Usage**

There are several additional benefits to using DSAbbox, and we recommend the design professional take advantage of those. The most pertinent helps the design professional in general responsible charge in fulfilling their overall project oversight: they can view other collaborator's documents, such as project inspector notifications, inspection cards, deviation notices, semi-monthly reports, and various reports prepared by the Laboratory of Record and independent special inspectors hired by the school district, including verified and non-conforming reports.

DSAbbox provides a communication tool which can be utilized amongst all project collaborators. Additionally, the comments feature is an extremely effective option, automatically sending email notifications to all collaborators whenever a comment is added in a DSAbbox folder.

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### Slide 23: Construction Changes

The design professional shall obtain DSA approval for all changes to the DSA-approved construction documents relating to structural, fire and life safety and accessibility portions of the project. DSA review and approval is required PRIOR to commencement of the work, by submitting an Application for Approval of Construction Change Document – CCD Category A ([DSA 140](#)). Category A CCDs affect structural, fire/life-safety, or accessibility portions of the work.

There may also be instances where DSA will require the design professional to submit a Category B CCD to DSA for review (via the same form [DSA 140](#)). Category B CCDs do NOT affect the structural, fire/life-safety or accessibility portions of the work. It's important to note that submission of the form DSA 140 for a Category B CCD is only required when specifically directed by DSA field representatives.

Refer to DSA [IR A-6](#) for additional information regarding the submittal procedure associated with DSA reviews of construction changes.

**(CAC Section 4-338(c))**

### Slide 24: Supervision of Inspectors

It is important to note that the design professional must supervise and direct both the project inspector and any independent special inspectors hired by the school district. For the case of these independent special inspectors, the design professional is responsible to supervise their activities and it is critical that they ensure:

- Their inspections are in strict accordance with the requirements of DSA-approved documents.
- Inspections are properly scheduled and monitored.
- They complete and submit required interim and final verified reports.
- They properly document their activities, including required daily reports, inspection and test reports and log distribution and deviation notices.

Remember – Design professionals do not supervise special inspectors hired by the Laboratory of Record; this is the responsibility of the Lab Manager of the Laboratory of Record.

**(CAC Section 4-335(f)1B) & 4-341(d))**

### Slide 25: Avoiding Stop Work Orders (1 of 2)



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As identified in the California Administrative Code, DSA can issue a stop work order in certain situations. Being aware of those triggering scenarios or events helps design professionals to be proactive and avoid the possibility of DSA issued stop work orders.

DSA will issue a stop work order in the following situations for which the design professional has a role:

- There is construction occurring using documents not approved by DSA, such as architectural supplemental instructions, bulletins, or responses to requests for information affecting structural safety, fire and life safety or accessibility portions of the work that have not been submitted to DSA for review and approval.
- Or, construction proceeding beyond incomplete or unresolved issues, such as:
  - Incomplete form DSA 152 sections, which may be the result of missing interim verified reports, such as the form DSA 6-AE.
  - Or, unresolved issues identified in Field Trip Notes on the form DSA 135 requiring CCD submission by the design professional to DSA for review and approval.

**(CAC Sections 4-334.1 & 4-432)**

### **Slide 26: Avoiding Stop Work Orders (2 of 2)**

Stop work orders can also be issued by DSA when:

- There is a lack of a DSA-certified and project-specific approved project inspector.
- Construction is proceeding beyond unresolved items listed below:
  - Deviations identified by the project inspector, using form DSA 154, remain unresolved.
  - Material testing or special inspection deficiencies continue to exist.
- Or DSA 152 inspection card issues exist, such as:
  - The project inspector is missing a card or cards.
  - The project inspector fails to notify DSA of construction commencement.
  - The inspection card is not being properly completed.

Additional information is provided in DSA PR 13-01 and IR A-13.

The design professional is responsible to effectively monitor the project status in order to ensure that stop work issues do not arise.

Additionally, in the event that a stop work order is issued, the design professional must facilitate reconciling the stop work order and ensure the Team responds in a timely manner and works aggressively to expedite a resolution.

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### Slide 27: Completion of Project

We now move on to the last section of the presentation: completion of the project.

### Slide 28: Achieving Project Certification (1 of 2)

As noted at the beginning of this presentation, achieving certification is a primary goal for the entire construction team and DSA's certification process is described in detail in DSA Procedure [PR 13-02](#). Triggering events requiring submission of final verified reports to DSA are if a building becomes occupied, or is in use, or is ready for occupancy or use (when the essential structural, fire and life safety and accessibility systems and components are complete), which usually occurs at the commonly known "punch list" stage of a project.

The design professional shall submit their Final Verified Report to DSA and the project inspector, via upload of form [DSA 6-AE](#) to DSAbbox, upon completion of construction of the project.

The design professional shall ensure Final Verified Reports are submitted to DSA by other applicable architects and engineers, project inspector, Laboratory of Record, Geotechnical Engineer of Record, independent special inspectors hired directly by the school district, and contractors.

**(CAC Section 4-336 and 4-341(f))**

### Slide 29: Achieving Project Certification (2 of 2)

The project will be certified and indicated as such in Certification Box when all of the following are verified:

- All Final Verified Reports are submitted to DSA.
- All addenda, revisions, Category A CCDs and deferred submittals are approved by DSA.
- All systems and components relating to structural, fire and life safety and accessibility portions of the work are constructed in compliance with the DSA-approved documents.
- All required fees are received by DSA.
- The Notice of Completion or "Statement of Actual Project Cost" (form DSA 168) has been received.

DSA's online tracking tool, eTracker, provides a complete list of project specific documents required for certification.

The Certification of Compliance letter will be issued to the school district and design professional (via mail) and posted in DSA Certification box.

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Unfortunately, missing documents frequently delay project certification.

### **Slide 30: 60 Day Notice – Request for Missing Documents in DSA 301-N**

When there are missing documents for a project, certification is not possible. As noted in the previous slide, all project-specific required documents can be seen online at eTracker (DSA's online project tracking tool) in the Documents Required list.

Sixty days after occupancy, or use, or ready for occupancy or use, DSA will advise the Team of this status and issue a form DSA 301-N (Notification of Requirement for Certification) to the school district. This form identifies all currently missing documents, including the responsible parties for such documents, formally requesting resolution of this issue by submitting the documents to DSA within 60 days.

### **Slide 31: Posted Notice – Project Uncertified in DSA 301-P**

Any documents verified still missing after another 60 days (which is 120 days total since occupancy, use, or ready for occupancy or use) will be identified by DSA with form DSA 301-P (Notification of Requirement for Certification). The project is considered “uncertified” at this time and DSA will post this form at DSA Certification Box where school districts, parent-teacher associations, newspaper reporters and any member of the general public will have access to this information.

### **Slide 32: Project Certification**

Project certification can still be achieved even after a form DSA 301-P has been issued by using a form DSA 302 which is the Response to 301-P Notification of Requirements for Certification. This form must be accompanied by the missing documents noted in the form DSA 301-P. DSA Procedure PR 13-02 has additional information that is helpful to design professionals needing to respond to a form DSA 301-P.

Once all of the required documents have been received, DSA will issue a certification letter for the project. Once this is done, the project is considered ready for occupancy since all of DSA-regulated aspects of the project have been constructed in accordance with DSA-approved documents.

### **Slide 33: Additional Information**

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DSA's website has additional information for design professionals covering the following key pieces of information:

- [Construction Oversight: The DSA Field Program](#). See especially DSA Procedure [PR 13-01](#), which was frequently referenced in this presentation.

- [Project Certification: Certification Starts When Construction Begins](#)

  - A helpful brochure outlining similar information covered in this presentation titled "[Project Certification for Design Professionals](#)"

  - Reference DSA Procedure [PR 13-02](#) for key details in the certification process.

### **Slide 34: Thank you!**

This concludes our presentation. Thank you.